THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The downward adjustment in the value of rupee effected by the Reserve Bank of India on 1st and 3rd July, 1991 is expected to restrain imports, improve India's export earnings, and encourage capital flows by restoring confidence in the Rupee.

(c) The Government have recently introduced far-reaching reforms in the export-import policy aimed at reducing controls through licensing, strengthening export incentives and linking import capability in a wide range of imports to export earnings.

Firing in Karan Sub-Sector

704. SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD:

SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pakistani troops resorted to heavy firing on Indian posts in the Karan sub-sector of Kupwara in J&K on June 29 and July 1, 1991;

(b) if so, the number of jawans killed due to firing by Pakistani troops:

(c) whether the Indian forces returned the fire;

(d) the details of the incident; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to face such challenges?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There were no casualties on the Indian side.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Our troops effectively returned the fire.

(e) Our troops are fully equipped and trained to meet all contingencies, to ensure our territorial integrity.

Reward to Informers of Income-tax Evaders

705. SHRI KARIA MUNDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the informants of Income-tax evaders in Delhi during 1990 and 1991 have been rewarded;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the cash reward will be given to the informants of Income-tax evaders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Yes, Sir. Reward including interim reward was paid to 17 and 24 informants respectively during the financial years ending on 31st March, 1990 and 1991 in Delhi.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Under the guidelines for reward to informants, an informant can be paid final reward only after entire tax directly attributable to information furnished by him, as determined in the assessments, has been realised after all the appeals relating to the assessments have been disposed of and the assessments have become final. Hence the time taken for the grant of final reward will vary from case to case.

[Translation]

Repair of Bridge on National Highway No. 25 at Shivpuri Bhognipur

706. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a bridge situated at Shivpuri Bhognipur on the National Highway No. 25 was blown off in October, 1990;

(b) if so, the extent of damage caused to the bridge;

(c) the total expenditure likely to be incurred on the repairs to this bridge; and

(d) the time by which the repairs are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The central span of the arch bridge was damaged and piers cracked.

(c) and (d) The State Government have incurred Rs. 1.00 lakh to carry out temporary repairs of the bridge, after which it was opened to traffic in November, 1990.

Setting up of Major Port at Hajira

707. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the experts had recommended setting up of a major port at Hajira (Surat-Gujarat) several years ago;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government for setting up of this Port; and

(c) the reasons for delay in setting up of the Port?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[*English*]

Cases Pending Before Central Excise, Customs and Income-Tax Tribunals

708. SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases pending before the Central Excise, Customs and Income-Tax Tribunals as on April 1, 1991;

(b) the number of cases pending for more than three years, Tribunal-wise; and

(c) the reasons for the delays in disposal of the cases and the steps proposed to be taken for early disposal of the pending cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Cases pending before Customs, Excise & Gold (Control) Appellate Tribunal (CEGAT) and Income-Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) as on 1-4-91 are 39,957 and 1,98,915 respectively.

(b) Cases pending for more than three years as on 1-4-91 are as under:—

CEGAT : 16,412

ITAT : 29,943

(c) Frequent requests by parties for adjournment, complex issues which involve time consuming hearing, increased institution of cases and unfilled vacancies of Members in ITAT especially those of Accountant Members, are amongst the main reasons for delay in disposal of cases.

Amongst the steps taken for early disposal of cases are bunching of cases involving similar issues, listing of cases disposable on the basis of earlier decisions of the Tribunal and Supreme Court and creation of additional benches for CEGAT. Steps taken in respect of ITAT include selection of new Members for appointment, separation of cases which can be disposed of by benches consisting of two Judicial Members only, identification of cases covered by earlier judgements and separation of appeals involving common issues for hearing in bunches and Members undertaking tours to stations where pendency is more or regular benches are not functioning.

Default in Repayment of Loans

709. SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of industrialists/entrepreneurs/businessmen/traders etc.